



**Price of a barrel  
of petroleum  
today:  
US\$ 52.77**

## INSIDE TODAY

### WORLD NEWS

#### DRUG WARS



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton greets a person during a meeting with indigenous students at an event in support of indigenous education in Mexico City, Wednesday, March 25, 2009.

See *INTERNATIONAL NEWS*

## SPORTS NEWS

#### DEFENDING ARNIE



Tiger Woods reacts after missing a birdie putt on the 17th green during the pro-am for the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament in Orlando, Fla., Wednesday, March 25, 2009.

See *Sports Today*

*Colombian Press impressed with Moby Dick's*

## ATA takes press members on VIP tour



PASEO HERENCIA – This week, management of Moby Dick's Seafood Restaurant Brian & Luz Marina Reeve and Gilbert Senchi had

the pleasure of welcoming members of the media from Colombia.

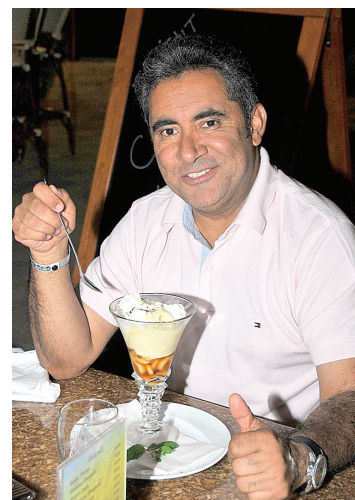
Joining them for dinner on the outdoor deck of the

restaurant were the Director of Cromos Magazine Jairo Dueñas and his crew Monica Moreno, Victor Gonzalebril, Annelie

Franke de Vergarra and former beauty Queen Maria Escobar. Cromos Colombia is the # 1 magazine in Colombia and has a circulation of 170,000 copies.

Also as a special treat, media members from Caracol TV Orlando Ramirez and Gina Lopez Quijano were present. Caracol TV, with its 34-year experience on television production, is the leading broadcaster in Colombia. Accompanying the group was the Aruba Tourism Authority Special Events Director Amayra Boekhoudt and Public Relations Officer Maritza Tromp Lacle.

*Photos by Julia Renfro*



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*Red-nose alert!*

## Aruba goes for the Guinness Book of World Records at Flora's Caminata



ORANJESTAD - Get ready for a major happening on Aruba: Flora's Clown Doctors' Caminata, which will be held on Sunday, April 19. This third edition of this carnival-like parade is going to be extra special, as we are going to try and set a record for the Guinness Book of Records by having as many people as possible wearing red clown noses for ten minutes straight.

The 2009 caminata will be one huge fun affair once again with lots of music, clowns and Disney animals with the added excitement of going for a World Record!

Setting the record needs quite some intricate logistics: witnesses will be asked to write down the information of all the participants and signed forms will be taken to a public notary and a bailiff who are in



charge.

Then, armed with a red nose, all participants will be asked to line up behind the music to start the effort. After 10 minutes of wearing noses, the caminata will begin for real. Emcee of the event is godfather of the Clown Doctors, Ruben Garcia, who is also in charge of the Frozen Moment after the parade.

The start as well as the finish of the parade will be at Flora. The starting time is at 5 pm.

We hope that everyone will mark the date April 19 on his or her calendar, so that a spectacular number of participants will set a record that cannot be easily broken. Who knows: the Clown Doctors' parade might be put on You-Tube and taken up by the major American networks like CNN, NBC and others. Overnight we all might become famous! ☐







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Aruba Tourism Authority reports

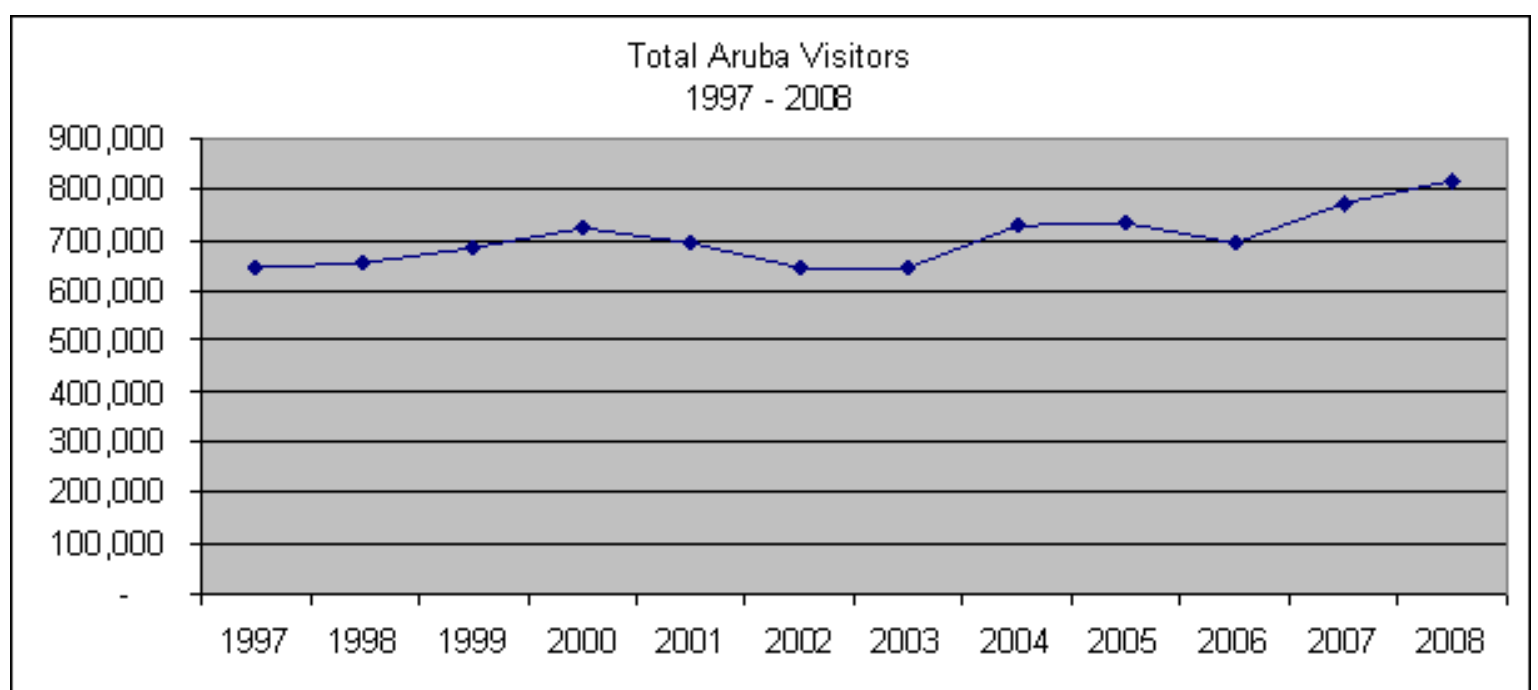
# 6.88% increase in stay-over arrivals in 2008

ORANJESTAD – The Aruba Tourism Authority, ATA, has just released the conclusive 2008 yearend figures of stay-over arrivals, reporting that as the number of Aruba's visitors was tallied at the end of December, excluding cruiseship arrivals, the result showed positive growth, an increase of 6.88% in 2008 over yearend 2007. In 2008, the total stay-over arrivals by air stands at 825,137 in comparison to 772,036 stay-over arrivals in 2007. This translates into an increase of 53,101 more visitors in 2008 over 2007 and a significant number of 131,765 more stay-over visitors over 2006.

The Aruba Tourism Authority is pleased to report that all main markets, in both North America and South America, countries supplying Aruba with visitors, have experienced satisfactory growth.

An in-depth examination of stay-over arrivals in 2008 indicates that the island was enjoying a double digit growth over 2007 for the first quarter of the year, with January closing at +20.8% growth, February at +22.0% and March at +19.1%.

The month of April slowed down to a still satisfactory +3.0% growth over 2007, then surged to a record of +22.76% in May, and cooled off again in June as the first summer month closed with



a +4.4% increase followed by July +4.6% increase and August +5.7% increase, over 2007.

From September on, the trend reversed, and the number of stay-over visitors slipped -5.2% over 2007 in September, -6.4% in October, -3.1% in November, with December closing at a +0.2% plateau, concluding 12 months with an average 6.88% increase in stay-over arrivals, over the previous year.

According to the facts gathered by the Aruba's Central Bureau of Statistic, CBS, the hotel ADR, average daily rate increased by 4.4% in 2008, yet the other indicator used by the hotel industry to measure business results, namely the rev par, revenue per

available room, experienced a decrease of -1%.

Aruba's average occupancy for the properties affiliated with the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association, AHATA, registered at 73.2% in 2008 versus 74.4% in 2007, a slight decrease of 1.2%.

As expected, Aruba's timeshare resorts performed well in 2008 posting 85% occupancy, compared to 83.2% in 2007.

The Aruba Tourism Authority states that in view of its finding, 2008 was overall a good year, but that the last quarter of the year is indicative of the tourism trend for 2009. During these difficult times, it is even more important for the island to continue to offer an excellent and diverse

vacation product, meeting and exceeding visitors' expectations.

January and February 2009 arrivals

For the first two months of 2009, stay-over arrival stats from the airport immigration

RADEX system, posted a -2.3% decrease for January while February registered a 7.7% drop, for an average of 5% year to date.

Since last year ATA has informed that due to the global economic crisis, it cannot expect further growth in 2009.

The current forecast for Aruba is a 5-10 % decrease in tourism arrivals in 2009. "This forecast can of course change, based on the further development of the global economic crisis.

Our goal is to minimize the decrease caused by the impact of global challenges as much as possible and to embark on new opportunities as they arise", said Myrna Jansen, Managing Director of the ATA.

Aruba's contingency fund for marketing will increase Aruba's high profile presence in the island's main markets, as that fund has dramatically increased Aruba's presence on Cable, print, online, in cinemas and subways, when it facilitated the island's current "90 friends you haven't met yet" campaign starring many island personalities.

ATA will continue to monitor the ever-changing economic picture with vigilance, alert to all changes in the fluctuating market. □

## Read ARUBA TODAY every day



# Donald & Mirian Friske honored at the Renaissance Ocean Suites Resort



ORANJESTAD - Recently at the Renaissance Ocean Suites vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring was effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at Renaissance Ocean Suites they call their home away from home. Donald & Mirian were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 20 years. Pictured: Mr. Ricardo Croes together with Donald & Mirian and also Frans & Tino from the Renaissance Ocean Suites.



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*Dessert: Brownie with ice cream or fruit sorbet with ice cream*  
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At the recent Bridal & Social Events Show

# The Jungle introduces an official "Bridal Registry"



ORANJESTAD -- Just one visit to The Jungle, conveniently located across the harbor free zone, in the Eagle commercial area, will turn any interior space into a 'home.'

The Jungle's diverse and unique collection of furnishings and accessories comes to Aruba from around the world, and store buyer Daveed Nataf remembers that no two people are alike, so that the store always offers a variety of designs, befitting any pocket, taste and lifestyle.

Recently at the Westin Aruba Resort during the Bridal & Social Events Show, the

Jungle introduced its new "Bridal Registry." And if you are sounding wedding bells and if your wedding day is nearing, you should stop over at the Jungle, for an out-of-the-box solution



to wedding gift confusions. Brides are invited to visit The Jungle and choose the furniture or the accessories of their liking. "Feel free to ask us for creative input," say interior decorator Estelle and store manager Marilyn. Together, brides may create a "Bridal Registry" of the pieces they desire, listed by their preference and by their



Photo by Julia Renfro

price. When the "Bridal Registry" gets mentioned on wedding invitations, the suggestion to visit The Jungle is made, and guests may pick a lovely wedding gift for the lovebirds, in accordance to their budget. "Should you be interested in our new Bridal Registry," says Marilyn, "please give us a call,

while it's a jungle out there, we're pretty organized and reasonable down here; we will be pleased to further explore all details with you." Pictured here the great reveal as the Jungle rolls out its Bridal Registry at the recent Westin Aruba Resort Bridal & Social Events Show, where the Jungle had its lovely collection on display.



## SAY "I Do"

## ... All Over Again!

## Cas Di Cultura

## March 27, 7:30 PM

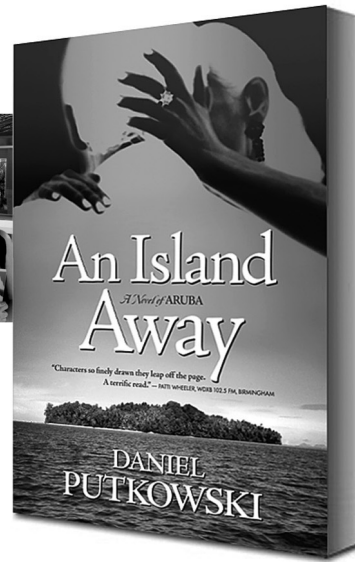
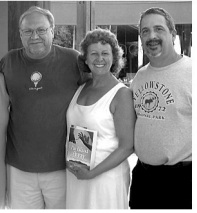
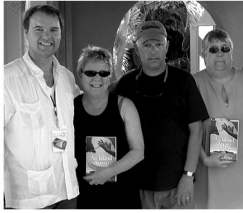
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VanDorp Gifts - Tamarijn Aruba  
VanDorp Gifts - Manchebo

DeWit & VanDorp - Certified MegaMall  
DeWit & VanDorp - Dakota  
DeWit & VanDorp - Oranjestad  
Aruba Post - San Nicolas  
Samsom Bookstore - Antraco Retail Center  
Antraco Bazaar - Casa Del Mar  
Ocean Drive - Aruba Marriott Resort  
Island Life - Marriott Ocean Club  
Mistral - La Cabana

Red Sail Sports - Port of Call  
Red Sail Sports - Hyatt Regency Resort  
Tropical Breeze - Radisson Resort  
Tradewynds - Westin Resort  
Tropical Market - Marriott Ocean Club  
Tropical Temptations - Costa Linda  
Ling & Sons IGA - Oranjestad  
Charlie's Bar - San Nicolas  
Plaza Bookshop - Dakota



*Celebrating our national Anthem and Flag day (Aruba Day)*

## Seaport Casino was sharing gifts like crazy from to right.



ORANJESTAD - On our national day the Seaport Casino held it's traditional "Flag Day Slot Tournament" in which the ambience was a great one, which everyone expected from the Seaport Casino. The entertainment was great and the prices even better. No Less then 8 winner for this fabulous day, and cash was the name of the game. Agnes Lo-A-Njoe was the big winner with 350 florins, second place came in Carmen V/d Biezen who went home with 200 Florins, 3rd place winner was Sherry Book who won 150 Florins



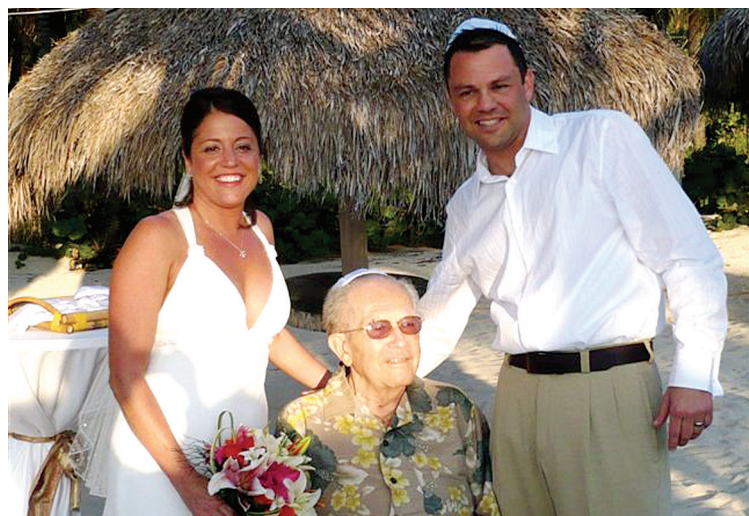
while Edwin Chirino won 100 florin. While Arcangel Lacle, Sidney Quandt, Betty Farrada and Ricardo Rojas they all won 50 florins. Seaport Casino

wishes to congratulate all happy winners and reminds one and all to keep visiting the Seaport & Crystal Casino where everyone is a sure winner !!





# The Beyerle – Nussbaum nuptials at the Radisson



PALM BEACH – Kelly and Jonathan from Warrington Pa., enjoyed a wonderful tropical wedding at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa. About 35 guests, all staying at the resort attended the destination wedding orchestrated by Lissy Lampe of Ceremonies & Celebrations in Aruba. Both bride and groom have been here many times, and while Kelly's Dad believes the newly weds have visited here four times, Mom reports a lucky number of seven previous visits. But whether it's four or seven, they love the island and wanted everybody they cherish to come to Aruba and experience it first hand, especially Jonathan's family members, since they have never been here. The traditional Jewish wedding ceremony, with grandpa doing the blessings, had many tropical touches, from flowers to music, going from a seaside hupah, the time-honored canopy, to gourmet pool deck dinner, lovingly prepared by the resort's culinary team. □





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## Friday Flamenco Fiesta; Well Worth The Short Trip Downtown Paella & Flamenco at Casa Tua Downtown on Friday

DOWNTOWN - Casa Tua draws a crowd of local and not-so-local folks who can't seem to get enough of the pizza and the place. There's almost always a wait here, even if you have reservations, so place yourself at the bar with the smell of brick oven pizzas wafting to other tables, and knowing that at some point, that bliss will be yours.

Al fresco dining is designed with a chicly rustic feel. The atmosphere is cool and relaxed, "Casa Tua" meaning "Your Home" in Italian.

With a Sicilian-style thin crust, dripping with cheese and fresh-made tomato sauce, this pizza comes with a variety of toppings in the meat and veggie categories. Pasta dishes, full Italian meals like Lasagne and veal Osso Buco, fresh salads and rich desserts are also on the menu.



Casa Tua's famous secret thin crust recipe was handed down by an Italian chef, known locally as "the pizza master", in the French student city of Montpellier in 1969. This recipe has been perfected over the years to such a point where Casa Tua is known on the island these days for the best pizza. Period.

**Casa Tua Palm Beach  
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## The world is your oyster at Moby Dick's

PASEO HERENCIA For a great and unique lunch experience, you definitely have to go to Moby Dick's Seafood Restaurant. This is the only place on the island to savor the legendary Bloody Oyster - the ultimate delicacy only known by deep sea



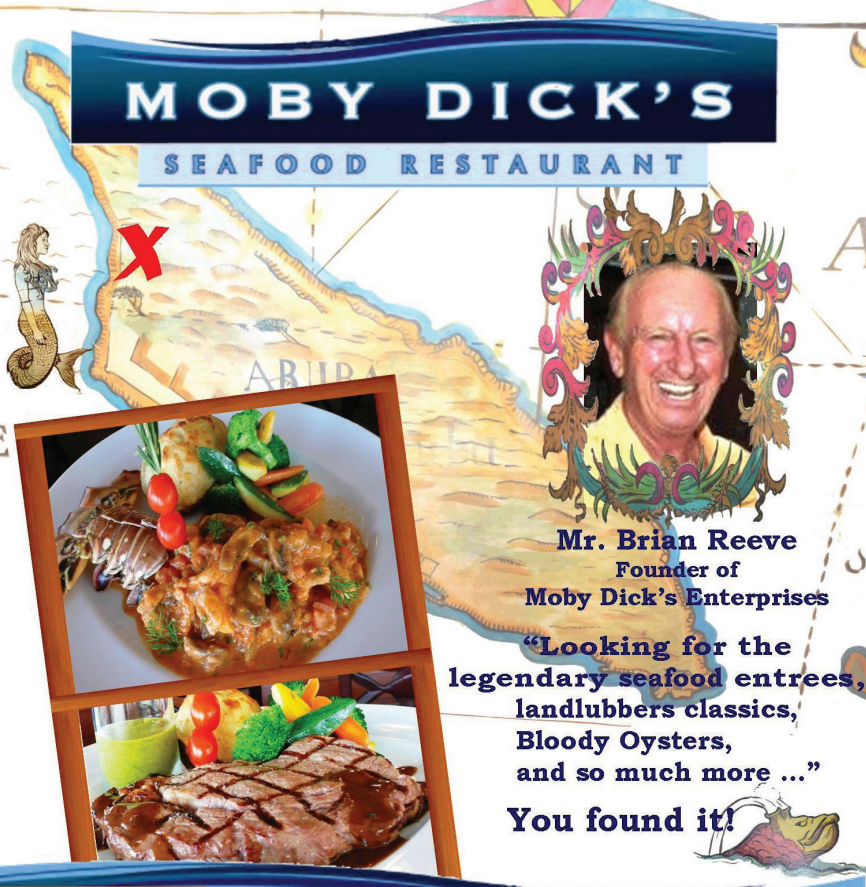
connoisseurs who take pleasure in its delight on Sunday mornings. No need to wait for Sunday for this deep sea concoction of Fresh Oysters, Cooked Shrimp, Cold Vodka, Tomato Juice, Tabasco, Lime Juice, Black Pepper and Celery.

Moby Dick's weekly lunch specials include the Famed Fish & Chips (Beer battered grouper fillet with malt vinegar & chips for only \$11.95.)

The Amazing Angus Wrap and other Memorable Sandwiches are absolutely delicious just as their dearly loved desserts. The inconceivable cocktails are even more reasons to visit this great place.

A must visit lunch appointment for great value, amazing décor, picture perfect outdoor terrace, across the street from the High-Rise hotels at the popular Paseo Herencia Mall.

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# Alhambra Casino



PUNTA BRABO - Alhambra Casino, the friendliest casino on the island, organized a special luncheon recently at the Hyatt Regency Resort and Casino to recognize, appreciate and thanks to the employees for their hard work and dedication. Special awards were given for 5, 10, and 15 years of service to Alhambra Casino. A special award was given to the Star of the Year 2008 to Marina Kock.

Mrs. Susan Varnes, President & C.O.O di Treasure Bay Corporation, the managing company of Alhambra Casino, came to Aruba for this special event.

Alhambra Casino is the only casino to celebrate 25 years of existence providing great service and entertainment to Aruba's visitors and locals alike.

Employees celebrating 5 years: Shirley Adamus, Roland Christiaans, Brenda de Cuba, Patrick Figaroa, Mike Flanegin, Christina Kingsale, Oscar Pietersz.

Employees celebrating 10 years: Maria Briezen, Gerardo Lacle, Edward Mansell, Violeta Orman, Alberto Tromp, Esmeralda Wester.

Employees celebrating 15 years: Claverina Tromp, Altagracia Zievinger.

Employees with perfect scores: Shirley Adamus, Jeffrey Blijden, Ingrid Boekhoudt, Mario Briezen, Henry Cardoze, Nicolaas Croes, Sandra Croes, Brenda De Cuba, Sandra Driks, Jesus Dirksz, Loreta Dirksz, Mirto Erasmus, Gilbert Figaroa, Mike Flanegin, Luwendrick Geerman, Haydee Godoy, Emilio Growell, Louis



# recognizes excellence

Gumbs, Rudolf Helder, Arnold Kelkboom, Neville Kelly, Nancy Kelly, Christina Kingsale, Marina Kock, Gerardo Lacle, Ina Lake, Judith Lampe, Ludwina Lampkin, Evan Levingston, Olga Narain, Jairo Paesch, Jamie Pascall, Osgard Pietersz, Rony Poterson, Michel Ridderstap, Roberto Schwengle, Roland Slikker, Mario Stede, Alberto Tromp, Claverina Tromp, Peter Van Boekel, Wilfred van Heyningen, Gilbert Wernet, Carlos Wester, RobertoWever, Nereida Whitfield.

Employee of the year 2008 was awarded to Ludwin Lampking. □







# Art Gallery Interior Design Studio

**Open House / Art Opening Friday 27 March 7:30PM**

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## West Indies Power begins geothermal exploration in Saba



**West Indies Power Scientists on Saba**

West Indies Power's geophysical team and their equipment are in Saba to begin exploration work that will assess the size and location of the geothermal reservoir located on Saba. The results of this work will be used to determine the best place to drill geothermal development holes and at what depth the geothermal reservoir can be expected to be found.

The work of the West Indies Power scientists, on Saba, consists of taking various types of electronic readings that show the location of faults that may contain geothermal fluids. The measuring devices have

the ability to "see" down into the earth to a depth of 10,000 meters. Because of the difference in the speed that the electronic particles are moving it is possible for the measuring devices to determine if they are moving through solid rock, broken rocks, or fluids. The results of the geophysical work supply a picture of what the inside of the earth down to 10,000 meters looks like.

The picture looks much like a "sonogram" that pregnant women have to see the outline of their baby and shows the location of faults that may contain geothermal fluids. Kerry McDonald, the company CEO stated "West Indies Power is excited about starting its geothermal exploration work on Saba. This geophysical work will show us where to drill so that

it can take the first steps to develop geothermal power on the island of Saba." West Indies Power (Saba) BV is a subsidiary of West Indies Power Holding BV created to explore and develop the geothermal resource in Saba. The Saba Island Executive Council granted West Indies Power (Saba) BV the right to explore for geothermal in 2008. □

## Bonaire welcomes new Commissioner of Tourism

KRALENDIJK, Bonaire - Tourism Corporation Bonaire has announced that Jeffrey Levenstone has been appointed as the new Commissioner of Tourism. A Bonairean native, in the past decade Levenstone has served in various managerial positions on the field of social affairs, human resources, parking and mobility end fast moving Consumer goods. Prior to his new position as Commissioner of Tourism, he served as Head of the Department of Economic and Labour Affairs. "I feel privileged to have been appointed to this position

as the Commissioner of Tourism," stated Levenstone. "I look forward to assuming the position of Commissioner of Tourism at this particularly challenging time in the global marketplace, when we are all called upon to work together to come up with new and innovative ways to keep Bonaire in the forefront of sustainable tourism. Those who have held this position before me have accomplished much, setting the bar high for those who come after," said the Commissioner. Levenstone is a graduate of the Academy Human Resources in Tiburg The Netherlands

and Jones University, where he earned his MBA in Project Management. Located eighty-six miles east of Aruba, the Dutch Caribbean island of Bonaire offers year-round sunshine, low annual rainfall, pristine coral formations and the most thriving fish population in the Caribbean. In 2009, the island will be Celebrating Bonaire's Commitment to Conservation, commemorating the 40th Anniversary of Washington-Slagbaai National Park and the 30th Anniversary of the Bonaire National Marine Park. □

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# Stocks manage moderate gain after erratic session

By TIM PARADIS,  
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Wall Street is showing it still has some moxie.

Investors shook off an attack of nerves that wiped out a big early advance Wednesday and then barreled back into the market right before the close.

Trading was extremely erratic. The Dow Jones industrials rose as much as 203 points in response to upbeat economic data, then fell nearly 110 during the afternoon before closing up 90.

Weak demand during an auction of government debt stirred up worries about how easily Washington will be able to raise money to fund its economic rescue program, market analysts said. The fear in the market is that the government might not be able to easily raise the hundreds of billions of dollars it needs.

The day proves that Wall Street remains fragile despite a two-week rally that saw the Dow regain more than 1,000 points.

“There was a mix of good and bad news and at the end of the day the good news won out,” said Alan Skrainka, chief market strategist at Edward Jones. “It’s a jumpy market.”

Doug Roberts, chief investment strategist at ChannelCapitalResearch.com, said, “Right now there is a lot of crosscurrents coming. People want to be flat going in to the following day. They really don’t want to be holding a major position.”

Some analysts said the late surge — which lifted the Dow nearly 178 points, or 2.35 percent in the last hour — was due in part to short covering. That’s a trend caused by investors who had borrowed and sold stock on a bet the market would fall, and who have to cover their positions when they see the

market starting to turn higher.

The day’s oscillations, which recall some of the volatile trading Wall Street saw during the worst of its fall and winter selling, aren’t surprising and in fact may be a sign of the market’s resilience. While no one knows if the market is indeed recovering, analysts expect pullbacks and uncertainty as investors try to figure out their next moves. Wednesday’s trading may well be setting a pattern for stocks going forward.

“I think we’re vulnerable to the changing views of the market over very short time periods,” said Jim King, chief investment officer at National Penn Investors Trust Co. in Reading, Pa.

The Dow closed up 89.94, or 1.17 percent, at 7,749.81, while the Standard & Poor’s 500 index rose 7.63, or 0.95 percent, to 813.88. The Dow is up 18.4 percent since March 9, right before the start of the market’s rally, while the S&P 500 is up 20.3 percent.

The Nasdaq composite index rose 12.43, or 0.82 percent, to 1,528.95, and the Russell 2000 index, which tracks small company stocks, rose 9.74, or 2.34, to 426.52.

Two stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where consolidated volume came to 7.53 billion shares, up from Tuesday’s 6.65 billion.

Bond prices fell after the auction of \$34 billion in 5-year Treasury notes. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, jumped to 2.77 percent from 2.71 percent late Tuesday. The yield on the three-month T-bill rose to 0.19 percent from 0.17 percent Tuesday.

Investors gave an unexpectedly cool response to the note sale just a day after a \$40 billion auction of 2-year notes

suggested strong demand. The government is running up huge deficits in order to fund an array of plans to provide stimulus to the economy and support to the ailing financial system. Any suggestion that demand for U.S. government debt is weakening is a negative for stocks, simply because Wall Street has been relying so heavily on the government’s rescue plans.

The surge of worry over the debt auction wiped out the market’s early optimism in response to durable goods and home sales data.

Orders at U.S. factories for cars, airplanes, household appliances, furniture and other large goods rose 3.4 percent last month, far better than analysts’ forecast of a drop of 2 percent. The increase was the biggest in 14 months and breaks a streak of six straight monthly drops. However, a large drop in orders in January was revised even lower.

New home sales rose 4.7 percent in February to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 337,000. The month was still the worst on records dating to 1963. Economists surveyed by Thomson Reuters had expected February sales to fall to a pace of 300,000 units.

The economic reports followed a series of better-than-expected numbers that have helped stocks rally so sharply the past two weeks.

Although the data haven’t been strong enough to shield the market from disappointments like Wednesday’s auction, analysts were heartened by the pickup at the end of the day.

“Today was somewhat different and encouraging in the fact that investors came in to buy weakness at the close,” instead of accelerating downward on the first sign of selling, said Michael Sheldon, chief market strategist at RDM Financial.



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange March 25, 2009. U.S. stocks jumped on Wednesday as upbeat housing and durable goods data fueled hopes that the toll taken by the recession may be abating, lifting shares of big manufacturers, banks and home builders.

REUTERS/Eric Thayer (UNITED STATES BUSINESS)

He said that marked a shift from the late-day selloffs the market had seen in recent months, when traders were abandoning stocks. But analysts still warn that investors risk getting burned if they are too quick to ratchet up expectations about the pace of a recovery in the market or the economy.

Big problems still have to be resolved before the economy can untangle itself from the deep recession. The nation’s

unemployment rate of 8.1 percent is the worst since the difficult recession of the early 1980s.

And home prices are still falling in many areas even as sales show some tentative signs of stability. That puts homeowners at risk of owing more on their homes than they are worth.

That in turn could bring more troubles for banks already saddled with bad mortgage debt. □

## AP Source: IBM to lay off 5,000 U.S.-based workers

SAN FRANCISCO - IBM Corp. plans to lay off about 5,000 U.S. employees in a new round of job cuts, The Associated Press has learned.

An IBM manager knowledgeable about the plans says the cuts will come from the services division and workers will be informed Thursday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the plan publicly.

The layoffs were reported earlier by The Wall Street Journal. This represents about 4 percent of IBM’s U.S.-based work force, which totaled 115,000 at the end of 2008.

IBM has about 400,000 employees worldwide and is aggressively shifting labor to lower-cost regions like India.

In January, IBM cut thousands of U.S. jobs in sales, software and hardware. IBM didn’t give the precise number, saying it fell below an amount that would require disclosure. □





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## Obama's "Investment" Strategy

Mike Memoli

Millions of Americans have seen their investments waste away during this economic crisis. So it was curious to hear President Obama defend his budget not as a spending plan, but as a package of worthwhile investments that will ultimately restore prosperity and set the nation on the right course. In fact, Obama used a variation of the word "invest" at least 22 times in his prime time news conference Tuesday night, battling back charges that his effort to expand health care, improve education and achieve energy independence would "bankrupt" the nation.

"What I've said here in Washington is that we've got to make some tough choices," Obama told the more than 300 reporters gathered in the East Room, and millions of Americans watching on television. "What we can't do, though, is sacrifice long-term growth, investments that are critical to the future. And that's why my budget focuses on health care, energy, education -- the kinds of things that can build a foundation for long-term economic growth, as opposed to the fleeting prosperity that we've seen over the last several years."

That statement came in response to a question from CBS News' Chip Reid, who reminded the president that he has said he did not want to "pass on our problems to the next generation," but put forth a budget that would add from \$7 to \$9.3 trillion in the next 10 years. Obama again pointed a finger back at the Republicans, saying they don't have the standing to criticize him on fiscal responsibility. And he argued that only by implementing the pillars of his agenda will a true recovery take hold.

"This budget is inseparable from this recovery, because it is what lays the foundation for a secure and lasting prosperity," he said in his opening statement - read not from his standard teleprompter in front of the podium, but from a monitor in the back of the East Room.

Obama's plan, like investments on Wall Street, certainly comes with risks. The political risk he takes is that each of his "down payments" on items like health care and alternative energy come with no immediate return - meaning that even if they prove successful down the road, the short-term impact to the deficit might scare off increasingly skeptical lawmakers. Obama recognized this, repeating throughout the news conference on a host of issues that he is not choosing the easy route.

"Look, if this were easy, then, you know, we would have already had it done, and the budget would have been voted on, and everybody could go home," he said. "This is hard."

Maintaining the status quo is simply not an option in his mind. And he said several times that Republicans have yet to offer a counterproposal, so he offered a straw-man argument.

"The alternative is to stand pat and to simply say, 'We are just going to not invest in health care. We're not going to take on energy. We'll wait until the next time that gas gets to \$4 a gallon' □

## To lift the US economy, lift sanctions on America's foes

By Bryan R. Early

Cambridge, Mass. – At a time when the United States is faced with its largest economic crisis since the Great Depression, why does the US government remain committed to being the world's most active user of economic sanctions? Given the economic circumstances facing the country and President Obama's goal of mending the US image abroad, the US government must reevaluate its sanctions policies.

In the research I have conducted on the international response to US economic sanctions, I've made several surprising discoveries about the effects the sanctions have on their targets' trade with other countries. In studying more than 100 cases of US-imposed sanctions from 1950-2000, I found that the United States' allies have consistently exploited the commercial opportunities created by US sanctions for their own benefit.

US allies have tended to trade far more with the states it has sanctioned than other countries. Part of this is because the US has lots of commercially competitive allies. It is also because these states use their alliances with the US as political cover to shield their companies from American retaliation. In effect, this means that the US subsidizes the economies of its allies to the detriment of its own businesses.

The US sanctions against Iran and Cuba illustrate this point well. Sanctions against Iran have forced American oil companies either to do their business elsewhere or give up their trade to foreign firms. It is not a coincidence that after Halliburton was scathingly rebuked by Congress for business dealings with Iran through its Dubai-based subsidiary that the company moved its entire headquarters to Dubai in 2007.

Halliburton moved because it was more profitable for it to do business in Dubai than it was to for it to stay in the United States. When the US government prevents its companies from doing their business profitably, how can we expect them not to leave?

In a capitalist society, profits – not patriotism – keep companies afloat (at least in theory).

At a time when there is growing anger over government hand outs to unprofitable firms, it

does not make sense that the US government is forcing companies with profitable opportunities to flee the country.

As for US sanctions against Cuba, in the past five decades Canada, Japan, Spain, Britain, France, and Italy have all played an active role in sanctions-busting on Cuba's behalf. One of the main reasons that these countries are even commercially competitive in Cuba is because of the absence of competition from US businesses. When American businesses have the opportunity to compete in Cuban markets, the results are impressive. After Congress lifted most of its sanctions on the export of food and medicine to Cuba in 2000, US trade in those products rose from \$6 million in 2000 to \$350 million by 2006.

How many new jobs would be created if US companies could once again fully trade with Cuba? After nearly 50 years, US sanctions have failed to bring about regime change in Cuba and cost US companies untold billions of dollars in lost opportunities.

Instead of maintaining beggar-thyself policies of largely symbolic effectiveness, the United States needs to allow pragmatism and its commercial needs to guide its foreign trade policies.

Remarkably, some of the same congressmen who supported the "Buy American" provision in the stimulus package similarly supported the Helms-Burton Act in 1996, which legislatively-mandated the US sanctions against Cuba.

If Congress can vote to "Buy American," why can't it vote to "Sell American?" □

American sanctions cost Americans jobs. With a new administration and a major economic crisis before us, there is a unique opportunity for policymakers to overcome the entrenched interests that support the sanctions against countries such as Iran and Cuba and do something positive for the American economy. The best part: It won't cost us our tax dollars.

Bryan Early is a research fellow with the Dubai Initiative at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School. He is conducting research for his book on how economic sanctions affect international trade. □



## Driftwood Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant offers diners the ultimate dining experience in freshly line caught fish.

ORANJESTAD - Why should seafood enthusiast and other diners alike go to Driftwood Restaurant? Well let's start by mentioning that their fish is caught daily by the owner himself and prepared by a local chef. "Just like mama makes it." The food is fresh, the staff is friendly, and the place is definitely buzzing. If you want to catch your own fresh fish and can't stay for a sit-down dinner, enjoy their Charter Fishing trip and have them prepare it for you. Trust me; it doesn't get any fresher than this: From pier to plate as their motto says.



Fried fish would be the common choice, but you can get your entrée broiled, grilled or baked. However you can indulge in the more guilty options for lobster, Alaskan king crab legs, grouper, shrimp, Black Angus tenderloin and so forth. Ease your

conscience and add a salad or go all out and try their delicious crab cakes, fish soup, garlic escargots, lobster crepe and coconut shrimps before your hearty entrée.



While seafood stars at Driftwood, fish-phobic diners will not go hungry. They have a staggeringly vast menu, which doesn't miss much of anything, from authentic Aruban seafood, lobster, Alaskan king crab legs to chicken, lamb or steaks.

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process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar case is specially designed for the cigars with the logo 'Aruhiba' and 'Made in Aruba'. Petrochi considers 'Aruhiba' a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars.

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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but **Texas de Brazil's** version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, **Texas de Brazil** will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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**Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek**

*Associated Press*

## EU presidency: US stimulus is 'the road to hell'

AOIFE WHITE

AP Business Writer

BRUSSELS (AP) — The head of the European Union slammed President Barack Obama's plan to spend nearly \$2 trillion to push the U.S. economy out of recession as "the road to hell" that EU governments must avoid. The blunt comments by Czech Prime Minister Mirek

Topolánek to the European Parliament on Wednesday highlighted simmering European differences with Washington ahead of a key summit next week on fixing the world economy. It was the strongest pushback yet from a European leader as the 27-nation bloc bristles from U.S. criticism that it is not spending enough to stimulate demand.

Shocked by the outburst, other European politicians went into damage control mode, with some reproaching the Czech leader for his language and others reaffirming their good diplomatic ties with the United States. The leaders of EU's major nations — France, Britain and Germany, among others — largely ignored Topolánek and his remarks. *Continued on Page B6*

## Dems advance Obama's tax, spending budget outlines

By ANDREW TAYLOR

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON

— Congressional Democrats advanced budget outlines Wednesday that largely mirror President Barack Obama's tax and spending plans while imposing marginal changes to tame ballooning deficits. "This budget will protect President Obama's priorities — education, energy, health care, middle class tax relief and cut the deficit in half," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said after the president met privately in the Capitol with rank-and-file Democrats. Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad, D-N.D., said the purpose of the president's visit was not to round up votes to assure passage of the plan. "He came here to show leadership and to show we're together on his priorities," the senator said.

Conrad indicated changes had been made to reflect concern about the deficit, the most notable of which was to assume the president's middle class tax cut would expire after 2010.

Future attempts to extend the tax reductions would have to be paid for from elsewhere in the budget to avoid adding to the red ink, he said.

Obama came to the Capitol as committees in the House and Senate settled down to review similar budget plans, with votes on the floors of both houses expected by the end of next week.

A version put forward by the House Budget Committee foresees a \$598 billion federal

deficit after five years. And there would be a \$1.2 trillion red-ink figure for the 2010 budget year, as opposed to \$1.4 billion under Obama's plan as scored by the Congressional Budget Office.

Obama, after describing his tax and spending plan Tuesday night as essential for economic recovery, traveled to the Capitol for a meeting with Senate Democrats on the issue.

Budget director Peter Orszag said the companion fiscal blueprints in the House and Senate would bolster administration efforts to give a higher priority to education and clean energy programs as well as taking into account Obama's desire to overhaul health care.

*Continued on Page B4*



Senate Budget Committee Chairman Sen. Kent Conrad D-N.D., left, accompanied by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev. gestures during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, March 25, 2009.

*Associated Press*

## Clinton: US shares blame for Mexican drug wars

MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY (AP)

— U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Wednesday that America's "insatiable" demand for illegal drugs and inability to stop weapons smuggling into Mexico are fueling an alarming spike in violence along the U.S.-Mexican border.

Clinton said the United States shares responsibility with Mexico for dealing with the violence. She said the administration will work with Mexican authorities to improve security on both sides of the border.

*Continued on Page B7*



Soldiers guard alleged drug cartel lieutenant Hector Huerta Rios after a press conference to show him to the media in Mexico City, Wednesday, March 25, 2009.

*Associated Press*



Postmaster General John Potter testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, March 25, 2009, before the Federal Workforce, Postal Service and the District of Columbia subcommittee hearing on the financial stability of the Postal Service.

*Associated Press*

## USPS chief says agency crashing

*See Page B2*



# USPS chief says agency crashing



A mail carrier who identified himself as Manuel makes his rounds in the Cow Hollow neighborhood in San Francisco, California March 20, 2009. The U.S. Postal Service said on Friday it is closing six of its 80 district offices. In addition, administrative staff positions at district level nationwide are being reduced by 15 percent and nearly 150,000 employees nationwide being given opportunity to take an early retirement.

*Reuters Photo*

WASHINGTON (AP) — Postmaster General John Potter said Wednesday the financially strapped U.S. Postal Service will run out of money this year without help from Congress. The only lingering question, Potter told a House subcommittee, is which bills will get paid and which will

not. He did say ensuring the payment of workers' salaries comes first. But Potter also said other bills may have to wait. Potter's appearance came as the agency, which has lived on a reputation of serving through wind, rain and all sorts of obstacles, seeks permission to reduce mail delivery to five

days a week. It also wants to change the way retiree health benefits are amassed to save money.

"We are facing losses of historic proportion," he said. "Our situation is critical."

The Postal Service was \$2.8 billion in the red last year and is facing even larger losses this year due to a sharp decline in mail volume in the weak economy. Potter broached the possibility of cutting mail delivery from six days to five in January, but the idea has not been warmly received in Congress.

"With the Postal Service facing budget shortfalls the subcommittee will consider a number of options to restore financial stability and examine ways for the Postal Service to continue to operate without cutting services," subcommittee chairman Stephen F. Lynch said.

Lynch said the financial stability of the Postal Service is "critical to the American expectation of affordable six-day mail delivery."

The post office is also seeking changes in its required pre-

funding of medical costs for retirees that could cut its annual costs by \$2 billion, a move endorsed by several subcommittee members.

"We are not here today to ask for a taxpayer bailout, but we are here to ask the Congress for help," William Young, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, said in his prepared testimony.

"At this moment, the survival of the Postal Service—a venerable institution that is literally older than our country—hangs in the balance," he added.

Even if the agency succeeds in reaching its planned cost cuts of \$5.9 billion, there could still be a \$6 billion deficit in 2010, Potter told the House Oversight Subcommittee on the Federal Work Force and Postal Service. "Without a change we will exhaust our cash resources," Potter said. "We can no longer afford business as usual."

He estimated that delivering mail five days-a-week instead of six would save \$3.5 billion per year.

Asked if layoffs would occur, Potter said it is possible, but he hopes avoidable.

Last week the post office said it planned to offer early retirement to 150,000 workers and is eliminating 1,400 management positions and closing six of its 80 district offices across the country in cost-cutting efforts. Dan Blair, head of the independent Postal Regulatory Commission, suggested in his testimony that other savings could be realized through closing small and rural post offices—something Congress has resisted in the past. He added that it may be necessary to increase the limit on the amount of debt the post office can carry.

The post office had a \$384 million loss in the first quarter of the fiscal year—October through December—which is usually the busiest period because of the holidays.

Officials said the recession has contributed to a mail volume drop of 5.2 billion pieces compared to the same period last year. If there is no economic recovery, the USPS projects volume for the year will be down by 12 billion to 15 billion pieces of mail. □



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# U.S. agency review of mining permits signals shift

DINA CAPPIELLO

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Breaking with the policies of the Bush administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is sharpening its oversight of mountaintop coal mining to ensure projects do not harm streams and wetlands.

EPA administrator Lisa Jackson directed the agency staff on Tuesday to review 150 to 200 applications for new or expanded surface coal mines, many mountaintop removal operations, pending before the federal government.

deny a more recent permit request. That objection is not part of the initial review of 150-200 permits.

In letters sent to the Corps' office in Huntington, West Virginia, the agency said the companies seeking the permits have not done enough to avoid and minimize damage to water quality and stream channels. The letters address mining permits sought by subsidiaries of Massey Energy Co. and Patriot Coal Co. for West Virginia and Rhino Resources for a mine in eastern Kentucky.

The permits authorize mining companies that blast away mountaintops to access coal to dump the waste into streams and wetlands.

The actions "reflect EPA's

considerable concern regarding the environmental impact these projects would have on fragile habitats and streams," Jackson said in a statement.

Environmentalists hailed the decision as a sea change in policy. The EPA has always had the authority to review and veto permits issued by the Corps of Engineers, but it rarely did so during the Bush administration.

The Corps has long been criticized by environmental and community groups and has been sued for failing to thoroughly evaluate the environmental impact of mountaintop removal.

Under the Clean Water Act, companies cannot discharge rock, dirt and other debris into



In this Sept. 18, 2008 file photo, a mountaintop removal mining site is seen at Kayford Mountain, W.Va. with Coal River Mountain, left, in the background. The Environmental Protection Agency put hundreds of mountaintop coal-mining permits on hold Tuesday, saying it wants to evaluate the projects' impact on streams and wetlands.

Associated Press

streams unless they can show they will not cause permanent damage to waterways or the fish and other wildlife that live in them.

Last month, a three-judge appeals panel in Richmond, Va., overturned a lower court's ruling that would have required the Corps to conduct more extensive reviews. The appeals court decision cleared the way for a backlog of permits that had been delayed until the lawsuit was

resolved.

The EPA's action on Tuesday could leave those permit requests in limbo a little longer.

Ginger Mullins, regulatory branch chief for the Corps' Huntington District, which covers portions of Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia and North Carolina, said the EPA reviews will delay approval of projects.

"It will take more time," said Mullins. □

## Air Force F-22 crashes in California desert near air base

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — One of the Air Force's top-of-the-line F-22 fighter jets crashed Wednesday in the high desert of Southern California. There was no immediate word on whether the pilot ejected.

The F-22A Raptor crashed 35 miles northeast of Edwards Air Force Base, Pentagon spokesman Gary Strassburg said. The Bureau of Land Management identifies the area as Harper Dry Lake, a vast and empty expanse of sometimes marshy flat land.

Rescue crews were at the site in the afternoon but there was no information on the status of the pilot, said Lt. Col. Karen Platt, an Air Force spokeswoman at the Pentagon. The crash occurred at 10 a.m., said Airman 1st Class William O'Brien, a spokesman at Edwards.

The jet, assigned to the 411th Flight Test Squadron of Edwards' 412th Test Wing, was on a test mission, said Air Force Maj. David Small at the Pentagon. Small did not know the nature of the mission.

The radar-evading F-22s each cost \$140 million and are designed for air dominance. The warplanes can carry air-to-air missiles but are capable



An emergency operations team prepares to move into an area where an Air Force F-22 fighter jet, on a test flight from nearby Edwards Air Force Base, crashed in the Mojave Desert about 25 miles west of Barstow, Calif., Wednesday, March 25, 2009.

Associated Press

of ground attack as well.

The \$65 billion F-22 program is embattled, with some opponents contending that a different warplane under development, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, is more versatile and less costly at \$80 million per plane.

F-22s were grounded for two weeks after one crashed at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada in December 2004. They were cleared again to fly after a review, and an Air Force statement at the time said officials were "highly confident in the design, testing and development" of the aircraft. The pilot in that

crash successfully ejected.

The U.S. is committed to 183 F-22s, down from the original plan laid out in the 1980s to build 750.

Its prime contractor, Lockheed Martin Corp., says there are 95,000 jobs at 1,000 companies connected to the F-22.

A spokesman for Bethesda, Md.-based Lockheed Martin referred all calls about the crash to the Air Force.

Lockheed is trying to convince the Pentagon to buy as many as 20 more F-22s. The military is expected to signal its intentions when the 2010 Defense Department budget is released next month. □

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**Vermont Gov. James Douglas announces his intention to veto legislation making same-sex marriage legal in Vermont during a press conference in Montpelier, Vt., on Wednesday, March 25, 2009.**

*Associated Press*

**DAVE GRAM**

**Associated Press Writer**

MONTPELIER, Vermont (AP) — Vermont's Republican governor said Wednesday for the first time that he will veto a gay-marriage proposal if it passes the state Legislature. Speaking at an afternoon news conference, Gov. Jim Douglas said that he thought Vermont's first-in-the-nation civil unions law, passed in 2000, provided sufficient rights to same-sex couples and that he believed "marriage should remain between a man and woman." "For those reasons and because I believe that by removing any uncertainty about my

position we can move more quickly beyond this debate, I am announcing that I intend to veto this legislation when it reaches my desk," he proclaimed.

Vermont would become the third U.S. state, along with Massachusetts and Connecticut, to allow same-sex marriage. The governor's announcement drew immediate condemnation from the Democratic House speaker and Senate president pro tem and from the head of the leading group supporting same-sex marriage in Vermont.

"I'm profoundly disappointed.

# Vermont's governor says he'll veto gay marriage

I think this is a sad day for Vermont and Vermonters," said Beth Robinson, chairwoman of the Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force.

Lawmakers vowed to continue dealing with the bill, which passed the Senate on a voice vote Tuesday after winning preliminary approval there by a 26-4 roll call vote a day earlier. The measure currently is in the House Judiciary

Committee and is expected to be up for a vote in the full House late next week.

Since Vermont passed its civil unions law, which permits state benefits for gay spouses, California, New Jersey and New Hampshire have followed suit. Massachusetts and Connecticut allow full marriage for gay and lesbian couples. Meanwhile, an effort to force a vote on same-sex

civil unions failed in the Hawaii Senate, essentially killing the measure. Only six senators supported the legislative maneuver, short of the nine votes required for a full Senate vote. Even though about 18 senators have indicated they support civil unions, they lacked the political willpower to go against Senate President Colleen Hanabusa, who opposed the effort. □

**BUDGET**

*Continued from Page B1*

In a briefing for reporters in advance of Obama's Hill visit, Orszag said the plans were "fully in line with the president's key priorities." Obama has said that he understands the process will require considerable give and take, but that he doesn't want to lose sight of the overall goals. He characterized them as "98 percent the same as the budget proposal the president sent up in February."

The most immediate impact of the budget outlines — which

are nonbinding blueprints spelling out the parameters of subsequent implementing legislation — is to impose a cap on the amount of money that can be doled out by the appropriating panels for the budget year starting Oct. 1.

The House plan, unveiled by Budget Committee Chairman John Spratt Jr., D-S.C., would cut spending less — just a \$7 billion reduction from Obama's domestic agency budgets for next year — than would the companion Senate plan, which would curb such spending by \$15 billion.

On larger issues like taxes, health care and combating global warming, the congressional Democratic plans simply seek to punt difficult decisions into the future.

The House measure also backs Obama's plans to essentially eliminate the federal guaranteed student loan program, replacing such loans with direct loans made by the Department of Education. The proposal would be advanced on a fast-track under the plan, which the Congressional Budget Office estimates would save \$92 billion over 10 years that could be used to fund other aid to students.

Obama has been hearing increasingly vocal opposition to the blueprint he sent to Congress last month, however. Some of the opposition on spending, particularly, has come from moderate to conservative members of his own party. For their part, Republicans have almost universally assailed his spending plan as overly ambitious, saying that it would dump trillions in debt on future generations.

While the budget plans that Democrats started pushing through Congress largely mirrored Obama's blueprint, the plan advanced by Senate Democrats employs some sleight of hand — such as assuming that Obama's signature \$400 tax cut for most workers and \$800 for couples will not be renewed beyond 2010 — to cut projected deficits to a more sustainable level. □



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# Midwest mayor optimistic after blast of ice jam

BISMARCK, North Dakota (AP) — President Barack Obama declared flood-stricken North Dakota a federal disaster area on Wednesday as some living along the Missouri River evacuated their homes and others worked on sandbagging and shoring up its banks. Demolition crews blasted chunks of ice near a huge ice jam in the river in a bid Wednesday to open a channel, like pulling out a giant plug to drain a flood threatening the state capital of Bismarck. “We are cautiously optimistic,” Bismarck Mayor John Warford said after the string of explosives went off about 500 feet south of the jam. He said officials would have a better assessment Wednesday night,

but said water appeared to be moving. Water backing up behind the dam of car-size ice blocks already had forced the evacuation of about 1,700 people from low-lying areas in Bismarck. The flood threat intensified after the region was hit Tuesday by a blizzard. Some 200 miles east of Bismarck, officials also called for more sandbagging volunteers in Fargo, and its cross-river neighbor, Moorhead, Minnesota, where the Red River was projected to crest Friday evening. The ice jam threat, created by ice flowing down the Heart River, was made up of chunks of ice up to 3 feet (a meter)

thick and the size of small cars, said Assistant Water Commission Engineer Todd Sando.

A second ice jam about 10 miles upstream of Bismarck was also a concern, holding back a growing reservoir. The National Weather Service posted a flash flood warning for a three-county area, saying the integrity of that ice jam, was unpredictable.

“The fact that it could break at any time is bad news,” Bismarck Mayor John Warford said at a morning news conference.

Obama’s declaration means the federal government will pay 75 percent of state and local government costs for the flood fight.



The Red River carries snow and ice as it rises and floods a home, Wednesday, March 25, 2009 in Hickson, N.D.

*Associated Press*

Sand supplies briefly ran out in Fargo early Wednesday because icy roads made travel difficult for a Minnesota supplier.

More sandbagging was planned in part of Grand Forks, the city hardest hit by a massive Red River flood in 1997. An elaborate dike system was built after that

disaster.

The blizzard had blocked hundreds of miles of highways in Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota and Nebraska. The southwestern North Dakota town of Marmarth reported 22.5 inches of snow and up to 2.5 feet of snow fell in South Dakota’s rugged Black Hills. □

# NY transit agency adopts fare hikes, service cuts

KAREN MATTHEWS

*Associated Press Writer*

NEW YORK (AP) — Transit officials facing a \$1.2 billion budget gap voted Wednesday for sweeping fare hikes and drastic service cuts that will boost the cost of a New York City subway ride by 25 percent to \$2.50.

By two 12-1 votes, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority adopted a measure on fare hikes and another on service cuts, but only after some board members angrily denounced state lawmakers and Gov. David Paterson for failing to bail out the financially troubled agency.

In Albany, the New York state capital, lawmakers were still trying to work out a deal to soften the blow for the 8.5 million commuters who use the MTA’s bus, subway and rail lines on an average weekday.

Under the measures adopted by the MTA board Wednesday, the base subway and bus fare will rise from \$2 to \$2.50 and a 30-day MetroCard will cost \$103, up from \$81.

The board also approved service cuts that include the elimination of some bus and subway routes. About 1,100



Larry Hellenberg, of Manhattan, buys a MetroCard at the Union Square subway station, Wednesday, March 25, 2009 in New York.

*Associated Press*

transit workers will be laid off. The layoffs amount to less than 2 percent of the agency’s 69,000-strong work force, but more cuts are expected.

In New York City alone, 7.4 million people use 27 subway lines and 243 bus routes on an average weekday.

MTA officials blamed the authority’s fiscal woes on the economic downturn. They said ridership is down and revenue from taxes on real estate transactions have fallen steeply. Through mid-March, the authority received \$97 million in real estate taxes, \$210 million less than it took in during the same period last

year.

In a side note to the agency’s budget woes, MTA board member Nancy Shevell came under fire from a New York City councilman for missing Monday’s vote.

Shevell, who has been dating Paul McCartney, skipped the meeting Monday to attend a gala film opening in London with the ex-Beatle. She was present on Wednesday and voted for the fare increases and service cuts.

She is “someone who does not belong on the MTA board,” said Councilman John Liu, chairman of the council’s Transportation Committee. □

# Judge defends secrecy of Sept. 11 documents

LARRY NEUMEISTER

*Associated Press Writer*

NEW YORK (AP) — A judge said Wednesday he favors keeping Sept. 11, 2001 terror-attack related documents and interviews secret until the trials for several families of victims suing the airline industry, an opinion that upset several victims’ family members.

Donald Migliori, a lawyer for families of three people who died on hijacked planes in the attacks, asked U.S. District Judge Alvin Hellerstein to make nearly a million pages of evidence and 200 depositions public, saying there was no reason for secrecy.

Hellerstein did not rule, but he said he favored not publically disclosing evidence that had been gathered and shared with lawyers for the victims under a confidentiality agreement until a trial occurs.

No trial has yet been scheduled.

He said the confidentiality agreement speeded a pretrial process that enabled more than 90 families of victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks to settle their cases. Only three families have not settled.

Michael Rowe Feagley, a lawyer for the aviation defendants, said it would not be fair to make all of the pretrial evidence public now, especially since defendants had turned over so much with the understanding that it would remain confidential before trial. He said it would take “extraordinary circumstances and an extreme need for it” to force its public release.

Mike Low, the father of a flight attendant who died on one of the hijacked planes, said afterwards that he was disappointed but not surprised by Hellerstein’s position.

Low sued in spring 2003 on behalf of his daughter, Sara Low, 28, a Boston-based flight attendant who died when American Airlines Flight 11 struck the World Trade Center.

“A few days after 9/11, a veil of secrecy came down. It’s still there,” he said. □



# HRW: Israel's white phosphorous use indiscriminate



In this Sunday, Jan. 11, 2009, file photo shows Palestinian Akram Abu Roka is treated for burns at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip. Human Rights Watch issued a report Wednesday, March 25 2009 that Israel fired white phosphorous shells indiscriminately over densely populated Gaza, and that this is evidence of war crimes.

KARIN LAUB

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel fired white phosphorous shells indiscriminately over densely populated areas of Gaza in what amounts to a war crime, Human Rights Watch said in a report Wednesday.

The New York-based group called on the United Nations to launch an investigation into alleged Israeli violations of the rules of war, including the use

of white phosphorous, during its three-week Gaza offensive.

The Israeli military said Wednesday that the shells were used in line with international law.

“The claim that smoke shells were used indiscriminately, or to threaten the civilian population, is baseless,” the military said in a statement.

International law permits the use of phosphorous weapons as flares or to create smoke

screens masking the movement of troops.

However, Human Rights Watch said Israeli troops frequently fired the shells over densely populated areas. The firing “was indiscriminate and is evidence of war crimes,” the report said.

The group documented only some of the cases, including white phosphorous shells fired at a Gaza City hospital, the U.N. headquarters, a school

Associated Press



Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek delivers his speech Wednesday March 25, 2009 at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France. Topolánek has told the European Parliament that the collapse of his government will not affect his running of the EU presidency.

Associated Press

ROAD TO HELL

Continued from Page B1

Obama pays his first official visit to Europe next week, aiming to thrash out reforms to the global financial system with the Group of 20 nations and call on NATO allies to commit more troops to the

U.S. war in Afghanistan.

Europeans leaders hope the new U.S. administration will agree with them on tightening oversight over the global financial system — which they see as crucial to fixing the global economy.

Instead, the United States is focusing its efforts on economic stimulus and plans to spend heavily to try and lift itself out of recession with a \$787 billion plan of tax rebates, health and welfare benefits, as well as extra energy and infrastructure spending.

To encourage banks to lend again, the U.S. government will also pump \$1 trillion into the financial system by buying up treasury bonds and mortgage securities in an effort to clear some of the “toxic assets” — devalued and untradeable assets — from banks’ balance sheets.

Obama insisted Tuesday that his massive budget proposal will put the ailing U.S. economy back on its feet. “This budget is inseparable from this recovery,” he said, “because it is what lays the foundation for a

secure and lasting prosperity.”

But Topolánek took aim at Washington’s deficit spending. “All of these steps, these combinations and permanency is the road to hell,” Topolánek said. “We need to read the history books and the lessons of history and the biggest success of the (EU) is the refusal to go this way.”

“Americans will need liquidity to finance all their measures and they will balance this with the sale of their bonds but this will undermine the liquidity of the global financial market,” Topolánek said.

Topolánek spoke the day after he was ousted by his own parliament. The Czech Republic currently holds the six-month rotating EU presidency but its leadership is in question, with Topolánek hanging on to a caretaker government at home after losing a “no confidence” Tuesday.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Gordon Duguid said he did not expect the Czech political turmoil to affect Obama’s upcoming trip to Prague because the president

and a market. In six attacks, 12 civilians were killed and dozens wounded, said Human Rights Watch researcher Fred Abrahams.

Each shell bursts into 116 burning white phosphorous wedges, over a radius of more than 135 yards. The wedges burn on contact with oxygen, creating intense heat, and can cause severe burns. The phosphorous kept burning for many days, and was still smoldering well after Israel’s withdrawal on Jan. 18.

Abrahams said the Israeli military was aware of the destructive nature of white phosphorous. Army medical officers warned during the war that the weapon is “potentially extremely destructive to tissue,” according to an internal army document attached to the report. Israel’s use of white phosphorous violated the laws of war, Abrahams said.

“They knew perfectly well what danger white phosphorous poses to civilians,” Abrahams said. “Their own documents prove it. They know that these areas were densely populated. Yet they fired it not once, not twice, but repeatedly into densely populated areas.”

Israel could have used less dangerous smoke screens produced by an Israeli company, Abrahams said.

was traveling to attend an EU event.

Analyst Nicolas Veron, a research fellow at the Bruegel think tank, said Topolánek’s view is not widely shared by EU leaders.

“I don’t think the damage can be as large as the very strong wording of this would lead one to think,” he said. “Many people have doubts about the U.S. plan but what he said is much stronger.”

Veron said European leaders worry that the U.S. plan may not work or could cost taxpayers heavily — but he did not doubt the U.S.’ “fiscal robustness” or that it still had extra room to maneuver to stoke economic growth.

Martin Schulz, leader of the Socialist group in the European parliament, immediately chided Topolánek, saying his comments were “not the level on which the EU ought to be operating with the United States.”

“You have not understood what the task of the EU presidency is,” he told the Czech premier. EU Commission President Jose

He called for an investigation by the U.N. secretary-general or the U.N. Security Council into all of Israel’s alleged violations of the rules of war, including the use of white phosphorous.

The United States supplied the white phosphorous to Israel and should launch its own investigation into whether the shells were used illegally, he said. Hamas should also be investigated for war crimes, including indiscriminate rocket fire into Israeli border towns, Human Rights Watch said.

Lt. Col. Shane Cohen, a reserve artillery officer, noted that white phosphorous shells are also used in the British and U.S. armies. He said shells would not be fired as smoke screens if civilians are present.

“The enemy might be behind the civilians, and you want to put the smoke screen in the middle, so you’re going to think more than twice, and nearly for sure, you’re not going to be firing it,” he said.

Israel launched its Gaza offensive on Dec. 27 in an attempt to halt rocket fire and weaken the territory’s Hamas rulers. More than 1,400 Palestinians, including more than 900 civilians, were killed in the war, according to a Palestinian human rights group. Thirteen Israelis were also killed. □

Manuel Barroso also said it was “not helpful ... to try to suggest that Americans and Europeans are coming with very different approaches to the crisis.”

“On the contrary, what we are seeing is increased convergence,” he told the parliament.

But Europe’s resistance to the U.S. call for new stimulus measures is starting to weaken despite Germany’s fierce opposition to any new spending program this year.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy said Tuesday he is prepared to support the economy with a new spending package. EU officials say they can’t rule anything out — even an EU-wide stimulus that could help nations like Ireland and Spain, which can’t afford any extra stimulus.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has also supported U.S. calls to ramp up fiscal stimulus — government spending and tax cuts — although the Bank of England has warned that Britain’s swelling public deficit may make it unable to afford new spending. □





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## DRUG WARS

Continued from Page B1

"Our insatiable demand for illegal drugs fuels the drug trade," she said. "Our inability to prevent weapons from being illegally smuggled across the border to arm these criminals causes the deaths of police officers, soldiers and civilians."

"I feel very strongly we have a co-responsibility," she told reporters accompanying her to Mexico City a day after the administration of President Barack Obama said it would send more money, technology and manpower to secure the United States' southwestern frontier and help Mexico battle the cartels.

Obama himself said Tuesday that he wanted the U.S. to do more to prevent guns and cash from illicit drug sales from flowing across the border into Mexico.

"That's part of what's financing their operations. That's part of what's arming them. That's what makes them so dangerous," he told a news conference.

"And this is something that we take very seriously and we're going to continue to work on diligently in the months to come."

Clinton's remarks, delivered ahead of her arrival in Mexico City, appeared more forceful in recognizing the U.S. share

of the blame. Mexican officials have in the past, particularly under the administration of former President George W. Bush, complained that Washington never acknowledged the extent that the U.S. demand for drugs and weapons smuggling played in fueling the violence.

"These criminals are outgunning the law enforcement officials," Clinton said, referring to guns and military-style equipment such as night vision goggles and body armor that the cartels are smuggling into Mexico from the United States.

"Clearly, what we have been doing has not worked and it is unfair for our incapacity ... to be creating a situation where people are holding the Mexican government and people responsible," Clinton said. "That's not right."

She said she would repeat her acknowledgment as loudly and as often as needed during her two-day visit to Mexico City and the northern industrial city of Monterrey during which she will brief Mexican officials on the administration's plans for the border and counter-narcotics aid to Mexico.

The administration announced Tuesday that it would increase the number of immigrations and customs agents, drug agents and antigun-trafficking agents operating along the

border. It will also send more U.S. officials to work inside Mexico.

In addition, it will allow federal funds to be used to pay for local law enforcement involved in southwestern border operations and, at the same time, U.S. prosecutors will boost efforts to go after those smuggling guns and drug profits from the U.S. into Mexico.

The measures fall short of calls from some southwestern states that troops be deployed to prevent further spillover of the violence, which has surged since Mexican President Felipe Calderon stepped up his government's battle against the cartels.

"If the steps that we've taken do not get the job done, then we will do more," Obama said.

In her discussions, Clinton plans to stress Obama's commitment and encourage Calderon and his top aides to boost efforts to combat rampant corruption by promoting police and judicial reform, according to senior U.S. officials.

U.S. help for such projects has already begun under a three-year, \$1.4 billion Bush administration-era program known as the Merida Initiative through which Congress already has approved \$700 million to support Mexico's



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, left, poses for photographers as she shakes hands with Mexico's Foreign Minister Patricia Espinosa at a press conference in Mexico City, Wednesday, March 25, 2009. Clinton is in Mexico for a two-day visit.

Associated Press

efforts to fight the cartels. Clinton's visit is among several high-level meetings on the matter. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Attorney General Eric Holder

are to meet with Mexican officials in early April before Obama is expected in Mexico ahead of the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago. □



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# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY



# Will golf next see another Tiger or another Arnie?



This is a March 16, 2008 file photo showing Tiger Woods, left, and Arnold Palmer talking during the trophy presentation after Woods won the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at the Bay Hill Club in Orlando, Fla.

Associated Press

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — The aging, yellow Labrador named Mulligan stretched out on the carpet next to the office door at Bay Hill and didn't move except to lift his eyelids when footsteps disrupted his morning nap.

Suddenly, he lifted his head and staggered to all fours, wagging his tail when he heard a familiar voice coming up the stairs.

Arnold Palmer climbed the final few steps and smiled at his dog.

For more than 50 years, Palmer has made everyone around him feel better.

That's why he's the 'King.'

And that's why he is more relevant than ever in the world of golf. U.S. PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem is asking players to be more aware of how good they have it. He wants them to be reminded that they essentially are working for the corporate sponsors writing the checks and for the fans behind the ropes.

Last week, tour officials posted a notice on the bulletin board in the locker room at the Transitions Championship. "Please remember to thank the CEO of this week's event," it read. "Cards have been placed in your lockers for your convenience."

Anyone think Palmer ever needed a reminder like that?

Brad Faxon remembers the first time he played with Palmer. It was his rookie season in 1984 at The U.S. Players Championship, and when the announcer began to introduce Faxon by saying, "In his first year on tour," Palmer mocked surprise as if the announcer was talking about him. The gallery roared with laughter.

Even more memorable about that day was what Palmer said to him as they walked off the first tee.

"He said, 'If you want to have an impact, be sure to look every fan in the eye,'" Faxon said.

With his power and charisma and sheer passion for the game, Palmer was responsible for bringing golf to the modern masses a half-century ago. He won his first Masters the year it was first televised. No other athlete has remained more relevant in retirement.

Palmer is the host this week at the Arnold Palmer Invitational, making him one of only two players to have a U.S. PGA Tour tournament named after him (Byron Nelson is the other). He last competed in an official event in 2006, but he will play in the pro-am on Wednesday, and four amateurs most certainly will have a day they won't forget.

The defending champion at Bay Hill is Tiger Woods, the greatest player of his generation, well on his way to winning more tour events and major championships than anyone.

Players like him don't come around very often, if at all. He has transcended his sport to become one of the most famous athletes in the world. He won a U.S. Open by 15 shots. He won another U.S. Open on one leg. Palmer is golf's greatest ambassador. Woods might be its greatest player.

All of which leads to an intriguing question.

Which is golf more likely to see next? Another Tiger Woods or another Arnold Palmer?

Padraig Harrington cast his vote for another Tiger, mainly because of the media and celebrity culture.

"It's hard to be an Arnold Palmer now," he said. "I don't know if the era could happen again where you could have somebody like Arnold Palmer, who was a man of the people. Now, sports people tend to be a bit more aloof and detached." Peter Jacobsen said he expected to see another Palmer before another Woods.

"Like day turns into night, I think you'll see the tour change again very soon," said Jacobsen, in town for a U.S. PGA Tour board meeting and to work as a TV analyst. "We've already gone from a tour that's got lots of characters to a tour with guys who are intense, quiet and driven. I think we're likely to see the next Arnold Palmer."

Golf is more interesting when Woods has a rival. Mickelson has resurfaced this year and could be No. 1 in the world before the Masters. Harrington is a threat as he tries to join Woods as the only players to win three straight majors over the last 50 years.

Even so, Woods attracts interest even when no one is there to challenge him. □

# NFL boss Goodell wants longer regular season



This is a Jan. 30, 2009 file photo showing NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell at a news conference for NFL football Super Bowl XLIII, in Tampa, Fla.

Associated Press

BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

DANA POINT, California

(AP) — NFL commissioner Roger Goodell wants the regular season to expand from 16 to 17 or 18 games as early as 2011.

Goodell hopes to have a proposal to present to league owners in May after the matter was discussed at length during the NFL owners' meetings that ended on Wednesday.

"It's possible that we could vote in May, but we want to have core discussions on this," Goodell said. "Anytime you have change, there is some reluctance. But it's clear we don't need four preseason games anymore."

Goodell said the league has not seriously discussed the subject with its broadcast partners or the players' union, and nothing could be done without a new labor agreement.

"I think the quality of NFL programming, that every one of our network partners would say, if they have the chance to have more regular-season

programming, they'd be interested in it," Goodell said. "A key point is the fans also recognize players they want to see are not in those preseason games; that's why they are not attractive. They want to see those players play."

As for those players and their union, Goodell recognizes an expanded schedule will be part of collective bargaining agreement negotiations; owners opted out of the current deal last year, and it expires after the 2010 schedule, which would be an uncapped season.

"Under the current agreement, addition regular-season games would not be covered," Goodell said.

Among the issues team owners must discuss is when the regular season would begin, how deep into February the playoffs and Super Bowl would go, and when the offseason programs — including the combine and the draft — would be held. □





## NHL Roundup

## Selanne leads Anaheim to big win over Nashville

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP)—Teemu Selanne scored the only shootout goal as the Anaheim Ducks beat Nashville 2-1 on Tuesday to move into a tie with the Predators for the eighth and final Western Conference playoff spot.

After the first three players for both teams were denied on their shootout attempts, Selanne skated in on goaltender Pekka Rinne and lifted a backhand just under the crossbar.

Jean-Sebastien Giguere then stopped Nashville's Radek Bonk to seal the win for the Ducks.

**Red Wings 3, Oilers 2**

At Edmonton, Alberta, Valtteri Filppula scored with 1:26 left in the game as Detroit beat Edmonton to move back into first place overall in the NHL. Jonathan Ericsson and Marian Hossa also scored for the Red Wings (49-16-9), who won for the fifth time in six games and moved a point ahead of idle San Jose for top spot in the Western Conference.

Denis Grebeshkov and Ales Kotalik scored for the Oilers (35-29-9), who lost their second in a row but remained

in seventh in the tight Western race, one point ahead of Nashville and Anaheim.

**Rangers 2, Wild 1**

At New York, Nikolai Zherdev had a goal and an assist, and New York moved into a sixth-place tie in the Eastern Conference by defeating Minnesota.

Zherdev gave New York its seventh straight 1-0 lead when he beat the first-period clock and then helped set up Scott Gomez's second-period tally that snapped a tie and sent the Rangers (39-27-8) to their eighth win in 11 games. They are tied with Pittsburgh, five points ahead of ninth-place Florida, with eight games remaining.

Marian Gaborik, who scored five goals against the Rangers in the teams' last meeting on Dec. 20, 2007, lifted the Wild into a 1-1 tie. It was Gaborik's first goal since returning Sunday from a 38-game absence following hip surgery.

**Maple Leafs 3, Capitals 2, SO**

At Toronto, Curtis Joseph stopped eight shots in overtime and Washington's

three shootout chances after entering the game late in the third period, leading Toronto to the win.

Joseph replaced Martin Gerber with 56 seconds left in the third period after the Toronto goalie was ejected for pushing referee Mike Leggo and shooting a puck in his direction. Gerber was upset after Brooks Laich stuffed the puck under him to tie it at 2.

Alex Ovechkin scored his league-leading 51st goal but was stopped by Joseph on Washington's final shootout attempt.

Phil Oreskovic and Pavel Kubina scored in regulation for Toronto.

**Canucks 5, Stars 2**

At Dallas, Daniel Sedin scored the go-ahead goal moments after taking a stick in the mouth, and Ryan Kesler and Henrik Sedin each had two goals as Vancouver beat Dallas.

Vancouver is 17-4-1 over its past 22 games and has 87 points to surge into a tie for fourth place in the Western Conference with Chicago.

Roberto Luongo stopped 35



Anaheim Ducks right wing Teemu Selanne, right, of Finland, looks at teammate Anaheim Ducks center Ryan Getzlaf (15) after scoring the game-winning goal in overtime during the third period of an NHL hockey game against the Nashville Predators, Wednesday, March 18, 2009, in Anaheim, Calif. The Ducks win 4-3 in overtime.

*Associated Press*

shots to help the Canucks snap a four-game road losing streak.

Dallas lost its fourth straight and has slipped four points behind Nashville and Anaheim for the final playoff spot in the West. Brendan Morrison and James Neal scored for the

Stars.

**In other NHL games** St. Louis 2, Los Angeles 0; Tampa Bay 2, Columbus 1, Montreal 6, Atlanta 3; Vancouver 5, Dallas 2; Toronto 3, Washington 2, SO; NY Ranger 2, Minnesota 1; and Detroit 3, Oilers 2. □



In this photo provided by Elizabeth Kreutz, seven-time Tour de France Champion Lance Armstrong listens to Dr. Douglas Elenz before surgery on his broken right collarbone Wednesday, March 25 2009, in Austin, Texas. Armstrong broke his collarbone in the first stage of the Vuelta of Castillo cycling race in Spain, Monday March 23, 2009.

*Associated Press*

**JIM VERTUNO****AP Sports Writer**

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Lance Armstrong expects to be back on his bike in days after surgery on his broken collarbone on Wednesday.

Even though the bone may take eight to 12 weeks to fully

mend, Armstrong must resume training almost immediately if he's to meet his goal of racing in the Giro d'Italia, which begins on May 9, in just over six weeks.

The 37-year-old American cyclist also plans to ride in the Tour de France this July.

## Cycling champ Armstrong gets plate, 12 screws in collarbone

Surgeon Doug Elenz inserted a stainless steel plate and 12 screws to stabilize the broken collarbone two days after Armstrong crashed in the first stage of the Vuelta of Castilla and Leon in northern Spain.

"Lance is going to be a patient who is going to push the envelope," Elenz said. "This first week we're going to make Lance take it easy ... ask Lance not to do a whole lot." After taking a few days off, Armstrong will be allowed to ride a stationary bike. Then doctors will monitor his arm strength, range of motion in his shoulder, as well as his pain, to decide what kind of training he can do. Doctors don't want him to strain his upper body in any way for a while.

Just hours after the surgery, Armstrong was posting to his

Twitter feed, reassuring fans. "howdy folks. Made it thru. Took longer than we thought. Playing with my kids right. Making me feel A LOT better," he wrote.

Although doctors initially thought it was a simple fracture, Elenz said X-rays showed it was broken in four pieces.

Rating the three-hour surgery on a scale of one to 10, from easiest to most difficult, he called Armstrong's procedure an eight.

"This was a challenge," Elenz said. "It was a hard case."

Elenz said the 12 screws were more than he might normally use, but he felt they were needed knowing Armstrong's goals. The surgery to stabilize the bone required about a 5-inch incision and the steel

plate measures about the same length, said Elenz, who added it's likely doctors will someday remove the plate. Armstrong returned to elite cycling this year after a three-year layoff.

During a conference call on Tuesday, he said he was frustrated the injury came just as he was getting into top shape. He was among the top 10 riders for much of the race on Monday before he crashed about 12 miles from the end of the stage.

Now, he's determined to get back to the front.

"I think the Giro is still very doable," Armstrong said. "This is definitely a setback, no doubt. It's the biggest setback I've ever had in my cycling career, so it's a new experience for me." □



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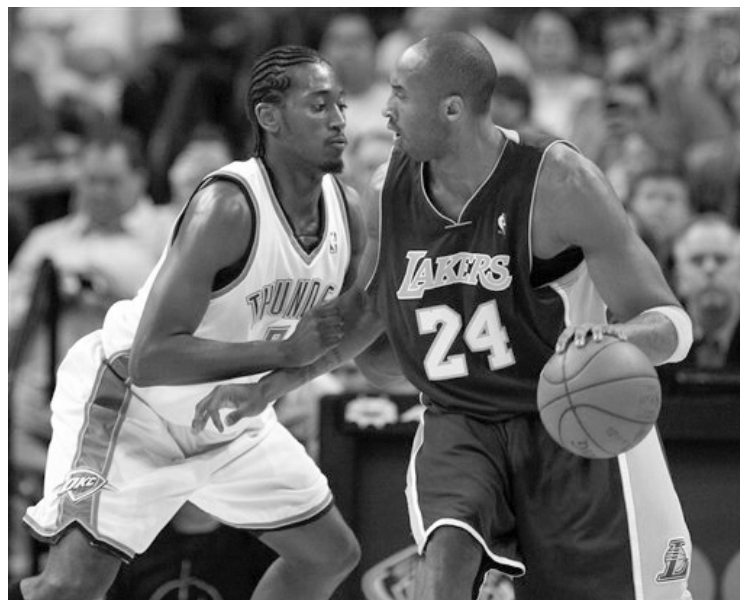
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## NBA Roundup

# Lakers rest starters in blowout of OK Thunder



Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, right, works against Oklahoma City Thunder's Kyle Weaver during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009. Los Angeles won 107-93.

*Associated Press*

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Kobe Bryant scored 19 points before sitting out the fourth quarter as the Los Angeles Lakers cruised to a 107-89 win over the Oklahoma City Thunder in the NBA on Tuesday.

The Lakers led from start to finish for the ninth time this season and closed within one game of idle Cleveland for the best record in the NBA.

Lamar Odom scored 18 points before fouling out and

Pau Gasol had 14 points, 14 rebounds and seven assists for Los Angeles. All of the Lakers starters spent the final 8 minutes on the bench, getting some needed rest two games into a seven-game road trip. Kevin Durant scored 24 points to lead Oklahoma City, which had all five starters reach double figures.

### Bulls 99, Pistons 91

At Chicago, Kirk Hinrich scored 24 points filling in for the injured Derrick Rose as

Chicago pulled within a game of the seventh-place Detroit in the Eastern Conference.

Tyrus Thomas had 18 points and 12 rebounds, and Joakim Noah scored 15 points and grabbed 10 rebounds as the Bulls earned their fifth win in six games.

Tayshaun Prince and Will Bynum scored 20 each for the Pistons, who clearly miss injured stars Allen Iverson, Rasheed Wallace and Richard Hamilton. Bynum also had nine assists while Antonio McDyess scored 16 for Detroit, which lost five of six.

### Spurs 107, Warriors 106

At San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 30 points as San Antonio edged Golden State. Roger Mason scored 24 and sank the go-ahead jumper with 23.8 seconds left as the Spurs dodged a rare three-game skid after last-minute losses against Boston and Houston last week.

Monta Ellis had two chances to win it for Golden State but missed a jumper with 5.9 seconds left, then watched his running 3-pointer as time expired clank off the front of the rim.

Ellis led the Warriors with 27 points and Stephen Jackson had 18.

### Jazz 99, Rockets 86

At Salt Lake City, Ronnie Brewer scored 12 of his 17 points in the second half as Utah ended Houston's four-game winning streak.

The Jazz pulled within one-half game of Denver for the Northwest Division lead and knocked the Rockets back to second in the Southwest.

Deron Williams had 19 points and 12 assists for the Jazz, who blocked a season-high 12 shots to help compensate for a poor night on the boards, getting outrebounded 52-42.

Aaron Brooks scored 20 points and Yao Ming added 14 points and 13 rebounds for the Rockets. □

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ORANJESTAD

SAN NICOLAAS

## Botica na warda

Oranjestad:  
Botica Paradera

San Nicolaas:



No. di Polis	581-1100
Oranjestad	582-4000
Noord	587-0009
Sta. Cruz	585-4710
Savaneta	584-7000
San Nicolas	584-5000

## Emergency Numbers



Emergencia	911
Polis	100
Brandweer	115
Brandweer II	582-1108
Tipline di Polis	11141
Hospital	587-4300

## Oranjestad

Ambulance	582-1234
Warda Polis	582-4000
BGD Oranjestad	582-8877

## San Nicolas

Ambulance	584-5050
Warda Polis	584-5000
BGD San Nicolas	584-1606
Valero Security	584-1720

## Services

Elmar	583-3000
Informacion	118
Kadaster	582-1311
Serlimar	584-6456
Setar	582-5151
Taxi	582-2116
Web	585-4600
Voogdijraad	582-1262
Taxi- Tas	587-5900
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Secretaria de Estado, Hillary Clinton, dice

# Estado Unidos culpable de mucha violencia en México

MEXICO DF (Reuters) - Un "insaciable" apetito en Estados Unidos por drogas ilegales es el culpable de mucha de la violencia que azota México, dijo el miércoles la secretaria de Estado estadounidense, Hillary Clinton.

La funcionaria reconoció el papel de Estados Unidos en el problema de los cárteles de la droga en México en su visita de dos días al país donde tratará con el presidente Felipe Calderón planes de Washington para fortalecer la seguridad en la frontera común.

Un creciente número de asesinatos de bandas del narcotráfico en México, que alcanzó 6,300 el año pasado, y temores de que la violencia pudiera extenderse a Estados Unidos ha colocado el combate de México contra la droga en un sitio importante en la agenda del presidente Barack Obama. Ello, después de años de que México considerara que Washington estaba desatendiendo un problema conjunto. "Nuestra insaciable demanda de drogas ilegales impulsa el narcotráfico. Nuestra incapacidad de evitar el contrabando de armas a través de la frontera para armar a esos criminales causa la muerte de policías, soldados y civiles", dijo Clinton a reporteros durante su vuelo a la Ciudad de México. "Siento fuertemente que tenemos co-responsabilidad", dijo.

El combate a los cárteles de la droga -que obtienen sus armas de contrabando desde Estados Unidos y matan a sus rivales muchas veces en las calles a plena luz del día- se ha convertido en la mayor prueba del Gobierno de Calderón mientras los sangrientos crímenes inquietan a inversionistas y turistas. Clinton dijo que los esfuerzos de Estados Unidos para prohibir las drogas y evitar que sus ciudadanos las consuman claramente no habían tenido éxito y que era injusto culpar a México por la guerra de las bandas del narcotráfico. Washington recién anunció planes para fortalecer la seguridad fronteriza con un

programa de 184 millones de dólares para agregar 360 agentes de seguridad a puestos fronterizos y reforzar la búsqueda de drogas, armas y dinero de contrabando.

## RETOS EN LA RELACION

Clinton también tratará durante su visita la disputa sobre transporte que sostienen Estados Unidos y México, además de otros temas comerciales y de migración.

Clinton dijo que los socios comerciales avanzaban hacia una solución a una disputa que llevó a México a aumentar los aranceles a productos estadounidenses por un estimado de 2,400 millones de dólares en represalia por la decisión del Congreso de Estados Unidos de terminar un programa piloto para permitir a camiones mexicanos transitar en territorio norteamericano.

"En la disputa de transporte, estamos trabajando para tratar de resolverla. Estamos haciendo progresos", comentó y dijo que esperaba que el Congreso de

su país fuera receptivo a las ideas del Gobierno de Obama. Clinton, cuya visita incluye una escala en la norteña ciudad industrial de Monterrey el jueves, dijo que los espinosos temas a discutir no significaban que las relaciones entre Estados Unidos y México estuvieran en problemas.

"No lo considero así. Creo que tenemos algunos retos específicos (...) pero toda relación los conlleva", comentó. México ha resentido el retraso en la llegada de equipo antidrogas que prometió el ex presidente George W. Bush, mientras funcionarios en Washington buscan asegurarse de que esa ayuda no terminará en manos de funcionarios o policías corruptos.

El Congreso de Estados Unidos redujo este mes la ayuda antidrogas que destinará este año fiscal a 300 millones de dólares desde 400 millones del año pasado, bajo un plan de tres años por 1,400 millones de dólares para México y Centroamérica. □



La secretaria de Estado estadounidense, Hillary Clinton, a su llegada a Ciudad de México, 25 mar 2009. REUTERS/Henry Romero

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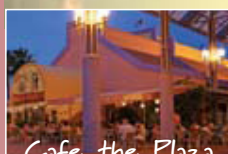
Tango Argentine Parilla is located in ARAWAK GARDENS in the high rise hotel section.

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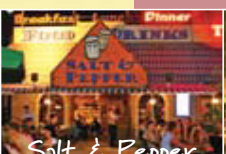
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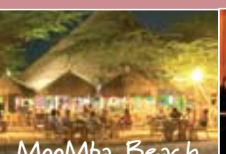
Café the Plaza



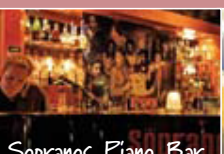
Tango Argentine Grill



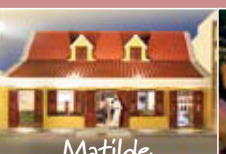
Salt & Pepper



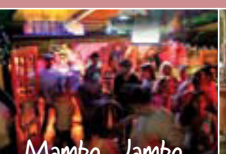
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Sopranos Piano Bar



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